

City of Kansas City, Missouri Twitter Guidelines:

As a social networking/blogging tool, Twitter allows users to send tweets (short text posts) up to 280 characters in length. The tweets are received by individuals who have signed up to follow the individual tweeting. Following this standard, City departments may open and maintain a Twitter account with the intention of communicating directly to Twitter followers, providing alerts or information and directing individuals to kcmo.gov for more information. These standards are to be used in conjunction with the concepts expressed in the City's Social Media Use Policy. As Twitter changes or evolves, these standards may be revised as appropriate.

Definitions:

Entity” or “entities” means a City representative that doesn’t necessarily fall under an official department or where it makes sense to have a separate and specific Twitter account to reach the public. Examples include KCI Airport, Swope Memorial Golf Course.

City of Kansas City, Missouri Twitter Accounts:

The department/entity PIO or designated social media administrator shall be responsible for the maintenance of their department or entity’s Twitter account. Departments or entities without dedicated communications staff may be granted an exception by submitting a written plan that outlines how the department will meet obligations under this policy utilizing full time employees. The written plan must be sent from their Department Director to the Director of City Communications.

Departments or entities will have only one Twitter account, unless otherwise approved by the Director of City Communications.

Account information, including usernames and passwords, must be registered with the City Communications Office.

The department or location Twitter bio should read: (Department or location name (i.e. @KCIAirport)) and what your department does. If appropriate the following could be added: Follows/RTs/Likes should not be construed as endorsements of statements by other accounts. Account is monitored during regular City business hours.

Twitter usernames shall begin with “KCMO” as approved (i.e. KCMOFireDept and KCMOPlanning). Usernames already in use are grandfathered in (i.e. @KCIAirport).

The cover photo should relate to the department that the account was created for. General skyline or miscellaneous photos of KCMO are also acceptable.

A department or entity Twitter account profile picture should be the approved KC moniker for that specific department provided by City Communications. Accounts already in use can have their official logo (i.e. @KCIAirport, @KCMOParks, @KCMOWater). If a different profile picture is requested, it must be approved from City Communications prior to use.

Twitter accounts can serve several purposes:

- Listening tool
- Customer service tool to respond to questions
- Communicate information pertinent to the brand
- Communicate emergency information quickly and broadly
- Promote City-sponsored events, facilities, and services
- Refer followers to content hosted at www.kcmo.gov or another City site
- Refer followers to the City's 311 system

Tweets and information posted on Twitter must be consistent to the policies and procedures of the department or entity posting the information and City policies. Tweets are to be relevant, timely and informative. While tweets often use more casual language and voice than other forms of social media, the department/entity PIO or designated social media administrator should be mindful that the account is a representative of the City department or entity and remain professional.

When sharing or posting photos on Twitter, make sure you have permission to use the photo or give credit to the photographer. When posting generic photos, you should use city-owned photos. Contact City Communications Office if you need such photos or have questions.

Tweets should be factual and avoid editorializing or opinion statements.

Twitter content shall mirror similar information posted through www.kcmo.gov and communications channels. Communications personnel shall ensure that information is posted correctly the first time as Twitter does not allow for content editing.

Retweeting or Liking: The City does not endorse content shared by social accounts, so please be aware when retweeting or liking other tweets from non-City social media accounts. Please avoid retweeting or liking controversial or political topics unrelated to the City. We also discourage retweeting information unrelated to the City because it can be confusing to followers. If you believe you have reason to retweet information or news items from another city, please make it clear the news event did not take place in the City. We encourage retweeting important information from other City accounts to help spread the message because various City accounts may have different followers.

Following: Please be careful who you select to follow with a City account. We encourage following other City accounts to encourage followers to find timely news and information from those accounts.

The department PIO/entity and communications staff will be responsible for interactions with constituents who communicate via Twitter's @reply or direct message functions. Communication with followers is to be timely and consistent with other communications channels in a reasonable amount of time.

Followers cannot be blocked or muted.

Because of the nature of Twitter, it is recommended that tweets should be posted more often than other forms of social media. However, on average, tweeting no more than 10 times a day (with exceptions for live tweeting events and/or meetings) is a recommended practice. Tweeting at least 1-2 times/day to keep the account active is recommended.

Personal Twitter Accounts:

The City respects the First Amendment rights of all employees. Please read the Employee Guidelines for Personal Social Media Use on myKC under Social Media to understand how employees should use their personal social media accounts.

If an employee can be easily identified with, or identifies themselves as, a City of Kansas City, Missouri employee on their social media profile, he or she should make it clear that the views expressed on the account do not necessarily reflect the City's views. It is recommended an employee should use a disclaimer on the account's bio or description such as: "The views expressed on this account are mine alone and don't reflect the views of the City or my employer."